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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 003590

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARPR, LONDON FOR TSOU

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [EPET](#) [KU](#) [NATIONAL ASSEMBLY](#)

SUBJECT: ACTING SPEAKER INFORMS AMBASSADOR NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY TO ADDRESS KEY LEGISLATION IN FALL SESSION

REF: KUWAIT 2788

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: The Ambassador met with MP Mohammed Jassem Al-Sager, Acting National Assembly Speaker, August 9 to discuss legislation that would be addressed when the National Assembly reconvened October 17. Al-Sager predicted the National Assembly would approve Project Kuwait legislation for development of the northern oil fields "soon." He also anticipated passage of the Article 98 agreement (ref A) during the fall session. Al-Sager pushed the Article 98 agreement through the Foreign Affairs Committee, which he chairs, during its last meeting before summer recess. He also shared his views on Saudi succession. Al-Sager said he hoped to visit Washington while in the U.S. for a UN conference from September 7 to 9. End summary.

Project Kuwait

12. (C) The National Assembly would vote on and pass Project Kuwait legislation "soon," Al-Sager assured the Ambassador. Al-Sager said he had spoken with PM Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah prior to his meeting with the Ambassador. According to Al-Sager, the PM asked for his help passing Project Kuwait (Northern oilfields project) legislation and expressed his hope that it would be approved "first thing" next session. (Note: The National Assembly is on summer recess and reconvenes October 17. End note.)

13. (C) Al-Sager shared his views on the global oil market and oil production in the Middle East. "The oil map will change" as a result of declining production outside the Middle East, he said, predicting an increase in the price of oil to between \$100 and \$150 over the next 10 years. He said only three countries in the world have the capability to increase production: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq. The development of refineries is as important to oil production as the discovery of new resources, he argued.

Assembly to Vote on Article 98

14. (C) Al-Sager predicted the Article 98 agreement (ref A) would be approved early next session. The agreement was only pushed through the Foreign Affairs Committee, which Al-Sager chairs, in the final hours of its last meeting before summer recess. With government support, Al-Sager claimed "we have a 14-16 vote head-start" on approval of the agreement.

Saudi Succession

15. (C) Expressing his views on the recent death of Saudi King Fahd and the accession of Crown Prince Abdullah to the Saudi throne, Al-Sager said King Abdullah needed to implement lasting changes, including holding national elections. Al-Sager was very curious about who would be appointed Deputy Crown Prince. It was "very, very important" to know, he said, because whoever was appointed would be the next Saudi King. Al-Sager highlighted the different outlooks of the two main contenders, Princes Sultan and Nayef, and implied that this might have ramifications on Saudi-Kuwaiti relations.

Possible Visit to Washington

16. (C) Al-Sager told the Ambassador he hoped to spend at least a day in Washington while in the U.S. for a UN conference from September 7 to 9. In particular, he wanted to go to Congress, the State Department, the Defense Department, and several think tanks. He specifically mentioned the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, which he said he liked because it was "connected to Israel."

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